

Application No.: 10/051,613
Amendment dated: December 3, 2004
Reply to Office Action of September 3, 2004
Attorney Docket No.: 0029.0017 (EG-12)

b.) Remarks

Claims 1-35 were pending in this application. Claims 1, 9, 14, 15, 22, 23, 26, 30 and 32 have been amended in various particulars as indicated hereinabove. New Claims 36 to 51 have been added to alternatively define Applicant's invention. Claims 7, 8, 10 and 11 have been cancelled without prejudice.

Turning now to the merits,

Claims 14, 15, 22 and 30 are objected to. Claims 5, 10 15, and 26 stand rejected under 35 USC 112. Informalities such as claims objected to and claims standing rejected under 35 USC 112 have been amended to comply.

Claims

Claims 1-4 and 34 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Pettit (US Pat. 6,077,620). Claims 12 and 28, 5 and 6, 7, 8, 12, 13, 23, 24, 32 and 33, 9 and 25 stand rejected under 35 USC 103. Claims 10, 11, 14-22, 26, 27, 29-31 and 35 are allowable if rewritten in independent form with intervening claims. Applicants' thank the Examiner. The rejections *infra* are respectfully traversed for the following reasons.

With respect to claim 1 and claims depending from it, the Examiner has stated that claims 10 and 11 are allowable if they are made independent with all intervening claims. Claim 1 has been amended to incorporate claim 10 and all intervening claims. Further, new claim 36 (and its dependent claims) incorporates claim 11 and all intervening claims. Therefore, claims 1 and 36 and their dependent claims are now in condition for allowance.

In terms of claims allowed, the Examiner has stated that claim 16, *inter alia*, is dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. However, claim 16 is already an independent claim. In a telephone conference with the Examiner on October 22, 2004, this was brought to the Examiner's attention. The Examiner said that the best way to disposition this issue, would be to substantively examine claim 16 in the next office action, which would be non-final. Applicants

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concurrent. Note that with respect to the claims dependent on 16, they have been already amended to correct informalities. Further, Claim 23 is amended to depend on Claim 16, rather than 13. The claims currently depending from 16 are 17-31 and 35.


Double patenting

Applicants wish to defer this issue until a final set of claims is allowed.

Applicants believe that the present application is in condition for allowance. A Notice of Allowance is respectfully solicited. Should any questions arise, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

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